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recent figures from the National Education Association estimate average salaries at \$28,000 this year.

"Teacher salaries are no longer a blatant disincentive to enter the profession," the report said.

• Starting salaries are also up, but not enough to eliminate the gap between teaching and other professions. According to National Education Association figures, the average was \$17,500 in 1987, while beginning accountants, chemists, computer specialists and engineers, for example, all earned in excess of \$20,000. But teacher salaries cover only a 10-month work year.

pay and making teachers more accountable. The last two years have produced new reforms aiming at freeing teachers from unnecessary regulation in the classroom.

In effect, reformers wanted higher standards to enter teaching, but fewer rules about what and how to teach.

"The next generation of teacher policy reform will need to focus on the content and nature of effective teaching, its assessment and its deployment within schools to ensure that the long-range goals of the reformers are met," the report concluded.

Blinding lasers planned by U.S., Soviet military

By Paul Bedard
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Conventional U.S. and Soviet ground and air forces in the 1990s will face a new and lethal weapon — blinding lasers — two senior Pentagon officials said yesterday in unusually candid remarks.

"Blinding in a tactical basis is something everybody has to deal with in the 1990s," Dennis Kloske, Defense Department deputy under-secretary for planning and resources, told a Senate panel yesterday.

Departing from the normal secrecy surrounding laser development, Robert C. Duncan, Pentagon director of defense research and engineering, added that "high energy" lasers under study could "permanently destroy the eye."

Under questioning from Sen. Dan Quayle, Indiana Republican, Mr. Duncan avoided offering further details, saying, "we're on very touchy ground, security-wise."

Mr. Kloske, testifying with Mr. Duncan before the Senate Armed Services Committee, indicated that U.S. pilots will face blinding lasers in the 1990s — in addition to enemy jamming devices that can dismantle the electronic systems aviators use to fly their aircraft and locate enemy fighters.

Mr. Kloske described the combination of jamming systems and blinding lasers that fighters will face in the near future as "lethal."

Mr. Quayle said he is concerned that the futuristic laser technology now under study would be banned by the pending intermediate nuclear forces treaty, which the Senate is scheduled to begin debating later this month.

He plans to seek clarification Thursday, when the Senate Armed Services Committee holds a closed-door hearing to quiz Pentagon and State Department officials on futuristic weapon systems that might be banned under the terms of the U.S.-Soviet pact eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe.

The Pentagon in October charged that a Soviet ship flashed a laser on a Navy P-3 Orion reconnaissance aircraft and an Air Force WC-135 weather-tracking plane near the splashdown area of a new Soviet intercontinental missile after a test flight.

The Defense Intelligence Agency claimed that the vision of a co-pilot on the Air Force plane was "disturbed... for 10 minutes."

Both the Navy and Army are working on programs to build killer lasers. The Navy is known to be developing a shipboard, high-intensity laser for use after all other defense systems fail. The weapon is being developed to "zap" an anti-ship missile as it approaches the ship.

The Army, meanwhile, is eyeing a system that would blind Soviet tank operators with a laser, according to Senate sources familiar with the program.

Another system now under study, said a Senate source, is a cruise missile equipped with a laser targeting system. The source said the missile would be directed to turn all of its energy on the target, delivering a potential knock-out blow.

The system, which could also be carried on unpiloted drones directed from a ground base, is being developed to target Soviet ground forces, the source said.

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